

August, 1957



Treading Water When We Need To Swim

If you are a manufacturer, you probably need water to carry off industrial wastes.

If you are a farmer, you probably need water to irrigate your land.

If you are a conservationist, you probably think of water in terms of national parks and wildlife.

If you are a housewife, you probably think of water in terms of your washer, dishwasher, garbage disposal, or your garden and lawn, or washing the car.

Whoever you are, wherever you are, you want clean water to bathe in, pure water to drink. At the same time, you want the products industry makes, the food the farmer grows, the national parks and natural waters for your pleasure and recreation.

The result is not so much a conflict of interests as a competition of a number of legitimate interests; not so much the private interests vs. the public interest as the servicing of private interests in the public interest.

A solution to this complex problem has long been sought.

In 1907 President Roosevelt set up the Inland Waterways Commission "to evolve a comprehensive plan designed for benefit of the entire country." He also said "... each river system is a single unit and should be treated as such."

In 1957, in his State of the Union message, President Eisenhower said "... each of our great river valleys should be considered as a whole."

It would seem that nothing but 50 years has been added since Theodore Roosevelt said that

America had managed to mismanage all its river systems for a century.

A great deal has been done in the interim, of course, but the nature of much of it is revealed by President Eisenhower's further statement that "piecemeal operations within each lesser drainage area can be self-defeating or, at the very least, needlessly expensive."

PLETHORA OF POLICIES

In the absence of a single water policy, separate policies have been established, the chief areas being irrigation, flood control, navigation, power. In addition, other independent policies have evolved, such as water supply, recreation, pollution control, fish and wildlife.

Congress has set up various agencies, then allocated to several of them the same or similar functions, so that in both legislation and administration there have arisen conflicts and jurisdictional disputes. Sometimes four or five agencies are covering the same territory for the same purpose; often they arrive at conclusions that are diametrically opposed.

The confusion within the federal structure is compounded when one examines federal-state and interstate relationships.

What is the way out of this maze?

BASIC CONCEPTS

The problem of water resources development has been studied by many official commissions. Each group has recommended unified long-range policy and practice within the area of its study, be it a river basin or the whole nation.

The concept that has won the widest acceptance is that of multiple-purpose development of water resources.

The President's Water Resources Policy Commission in its 1950 publication said that "comprehensive development of an entire river system for many purposes" was the best means of achieving public objectives.

The second Hoover Commission said that "water resources development should be generally undertaken by drainage areas—locally and regionally."

The President's Water Resources Advisory Committee in 1956 said: "There has been a general acceptance of the river basin or major drainage area as ordinarily the most appropriate geographic unit for use in planning water resources activities."

At the same time, many students in the field of public administration are of the opinion that local and state effort should play a larger role in water resources development.

Those who believe that a greater degree of local participation in development programs would serve to strengthen the role of the states, suggest three steps:

- 1) Consolidation of federal agencies concerned with resource development in order to eliminate duplication and competition;
- 2) organization of a strong resource committee or board in each state which could act on both state and interstate matters;
- 3) cooperation among the states, possibly through interstate compacts, in order that the states might function jointly

with the federal agencies on interstate streams.

Consideration of the third point gives rise to obvious questions: Can the problems of a tributary river be solved by themselves, or are they related to the larger stream? If the stream is interstate, does this raise additional problems for other states and the federal government? A look at a map will reveal the typical interstate nature of even small streams.

PROPOSALS MADE

Though many studies have stressed that the "greatest single weakness" in the federal government's water resources activities is the lack of cooperation and coordination of federal agencies, few are of the opinion that a solution of this one problem would solve all problems. It would be a step, however, and most studies point out the need for some type of unified administration.

★ CONGRESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT ★

July 22

FOREIGN AID: House passed S. 2130, Mutual Security authorizing legislation, July 19, cutting defense support and atoms-for-peace funds and reducing authority for Development Loan Fund to one year. Bill now goes to conference with Senate. House and Senate Appropriations Committees continued hearings on foreign aid funds.

UNEF: Senate Foreign Relations Committee July 16 reported S. Res. 15, expressing Senate support for permanent U. N. force similar to present Emergency Force.

STATUS OF FORCES: H.R. 8704 (Kilday, D., Tex.) and similar bills would prohibit delivery of members of American Armed Forces to jurisdiction of any foreign nation. House Armed Services Committee scheduled hearing July 24.

TRADE: House Ways and Means Committee voted July 9 not to hold hearings on Organization for Trade Cooperation (OTC).

LOYALTY-SECURITY: House Civil Service and Post Office Committee began hearings July 16 on H.R. 8322 (Murray, D., Tenn.) and H.R. 8323 (Rees, R., Kans.) to put into effect recommendations of Commission on Government Security, and, as a stopgap measure before congressional decision on Commission's recommendations, H.R. 981 (Walter, D., Pa.) to permit summary suspension of any federal civilian employee "in the interest of national security."

Congress, however, is the deciding factor. If the responsibilities of congressional committees were realigned to avoid duplication, there would be less confusion at the administrative level.

One proposal advanced is that there be a single coordinating agency.

Another is that an independent Board of Review be established by Congress to serve both the Congress and the President.

Another is that River Basin

LEAGUE TESTIFIES

Two members of the national Board of the League testified July 9 before congressional committees—Mrs. Oscar M. Ruebhausen before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, and Mrs. Donald F. Bishop before the Judiciary Subcommittee of the Senate District of Columbia Committee.

Mrs. Ruebhausen referred to national Council action in April reaffirming the League's "desire to see adequate programs enacted for economic aid, a long-range development fund, U. S. technical cooperation and the U. N. Technical Assistance Program."

She said "the U. S. appropriation to the UNTA has been steadily reduced from 60 percent in 1952, to 55 percent in 1954, to 49 percent in 1957." Mentioning that other countries have increased their pledges, she stated that "on the basis of the 1957 pledges, four nations pay more per capita than does the United States, 13 nations pay more in ratio to their national income per million, 22 nations pay a larger percentage than is their percentage assessment to the regular U. N. budget.

"The League of Women Voters would like to see the U. S. appropriations to the UNTA maintained at 49 percent of the Program. We are opposed to a reduction to 45 percent, and deplore the suggestion that the funds be reduced to 33½ percent by 1960."

Mrs. Bishop also mentioned the 1957 national Council, saying that delegates "overwhelmingly reaffirmed their support of the principle of self-government for the District." She said "surely there is no need to postpone for future Congresses this decision. We urge you to grant to the inhabitants of the District of Columbia the powers of local self-government, which are a basic right and privilege of all American citizens."

Copies of the testimony of both Board members have been sent to each local and state League president. Additional copies of Mrs. Ruebhausen's 1000-word statement are available from the national office at 5c each; Mrs. Bishop's 125-word statement is available free upon request.

Commissions or Water Resources Committees be formed with a permanent nonvoting chairman appointed by the President and with membership composed of representatives of all federal departments and states involved.

The first Hoover Commission Report recommended consolidation of federal resource agencies into a Department of Natural Resources.

The 1956 Water Resources Policy Report proposes Water Resources Committees to become the key agencies in a coordinated realignment of federal government functions. They would plan flood control, irrigation, navigation, hydroelectric power, pollution abatement, fish and wildlife protection, and water supply for all domestic, industrial and agricultural uses.

Congressional action would be required to put any of these plans into operation. The conflicts and disputes of the federal agencies have been the subject of reports over a period of 20 years by committees and commissions named by Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower.

The first Hoover Commission and a task force in 1949 recognized these conflicts as a bar to development of a national water policy, as did President Truman's Water Resources Policy Commission in 1950.

The studies have produced voluminous testimony, but none of the recommendations has been enacted by Congress, chiefly, in the opinion of authorities, because of the disputes among federal agencies.

REIMBURSEMENT

There are still other aspects of the water problem. Reimbursement requirements are full of inconsistencies and present one of the most important questions in the whole subject of water. The five study groups which have considered the question have unanimously favored a decrease in the federal subsidy, but the trend in the opposite direction appears to be increasing.

The task force of the first Hoover Commission wrote: "Although the committee is not prepared to make specific recommendations, it be-

lieves that the most pressing need for statutory revision has to do with financial policy."

The 1956 Water Resources Report discussed the reimbursement inconsistencies in a section entitled "special problems."

Reimbursement requirements of federal funds for water resources development range from almost complete subsidy of flood control to complete reimbursement of costs-plus-interest for power.

WHAT TO DO?

The basic shortcoming in our national history so far as water is concerned is our lack of willingness to regard water as a primary natural resource; in short, a lack of long-range planning in the public interest.

The president of the Southwest Research Institute has written that if we had had long-range planning for the retention of our waters, replenishing our ground reservoirs, providing more lakes and surface reservoirs, we would have had adequate water for our needs not only during droughts but until the year 2000.

Our historic lack of respect for the value of water has meant that we have not deemed it necessary to authorize the engineering expenditures which a long-range plan would demand.

According to many we have made future water supply development more costly than it need have been by haphazard location of urban settlement and industry, by single-purpose planning, by indiscriminate use of streams for waste disposal, by commitments to develop that part of the nation which is the most expensive to irrigate, by overbuilding industry, trade and agriculture on "mined" ground water, and by legal restrictions on the movement of water across state lines.

Science can solve the technical problems. Will statesmanship rise to the challenge of intelligent planning? Will citizens, harassed by threats of "clean bombs and dirty wars," give enough attention to a problem more diffuse, perhaps, but not less vital to their future welfare?

From the PRESIDENT'S DESK



which honestly affirmative answers to these questions could be given. It would be equally valuable if Leagues would limit their recommendations to only those subjects which in their judgment could be worked upon effectively in conjunction with local and state commitments. Too often a League will propose six or eight subjects for the national program and indicate that all are suitable but to choose among them is beyond its powers.

To make choices and decisions is a necessary function of individuals in a democratic society. It is perhaps the hardest thing League members ever have to do. But when individuals participate personally in the making of decisions there is usually a heightened sense of responsibility.

This condition is particularly desirable in regard to Continuing Responsibilities, which are very much a part of one total program. Frequently when CRs are proposed or adopted there is a feeling that "the League" will take care of it without involving the members. Actually the rules of the game as we have agreed upon them make the member responsible for carrying out the **total** program. This should not be forgotten.

The national Convention will be held in Atlantic City, N.J., April 21-25, 1958. The decisions made at that time will be wise and forward-looking in direct proportion to the breadth and depth of member participation in the preliminary period.

At this point in League activities it is well to remember the advice of Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Life is action and passion. I think it is required of a man that he should share the action and passion of his times on peril of being judged as not to have lived."

We have seen League program debate develop passion; most of us are in the League because it takes action. Surely the League provides us with unique opportunity to share vitally in our times; involvement in the League invariably extends our capacity for living. Let us make the most of it!

Lucy Marvin Lee

A LEAGUER BECOMES A POLITICO

"The League is fine as far as it goes, but it is only a training ground for real politics," say most practical politicians who have never been members of the League of Women Voters.

"The League isn't a *preparation* for something, it is something in itself," say most Leaguers who have never worked in a political party or run for public office.

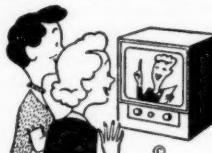
Most of those who have done both—been active in the League and then become active in party politics—say they have mixed emotions, even divided loyalties. They say they would never have entered politics but for their League training, feel they are better public servants for having learned "the League way," and adapt the League way to public office whenever possible.

One such person now in public office recently expressed her reactions in a letter to the League's national President. Her observations are so typical that THE NATIONAL VOTER quotes her letter almost in entirety, deleting only those references which localize or personalize the situation.

"My election to the office of alderman (the first woman so elected here) is in a very small way evidence of the fact that the League of Women Voters is a training ground for political life. I am writing about my experience in the hope that it may encourage other women. Without League training I could never have undertaken a

campaign.

"I am not a politician by inclination. I was brought up to believe that politics is a 'dirty business' not fit for a man and certainly not for a woman. I do not even remember faces or names very well. I have never been a



joiner and the League is the only organization in which I have worked very assiduously. Even in the League, leadership was thrust upon me step by step because of circumstances rather than because I was a natural leader.

"Without the very able help of my husband and friends I would not have been able to organize a campaign. Although _____ is a rather small city, its population is growing and changing rapidly, and it is no longer possible for anyone to be well-known throughout the community. Much as I dislike advertising myself, I knew when I became a candidate I must make myself known to the voters. Besides, Leaguers feel the voters have a right to know something about their candidates. In addition to a small steering committee, about 100 individuals helped carry out the many necessary activities. Naturally, I refrained from asking the aid of officers or Board members of the League.

"We began by carefully planning and organizing the whole campaign. Beginning with the public announcement of my candidacy, we set up a timetable for the six-weeks period before election day. A miniature finance campaign was organized, which obtained enough contributions (mostly small ones) to defray the greater part of the expense of printing and postage. The timetable was so arranged that either printed material appeared or speeches were made every week. By the time of the election I could not even take a bird walk without being recognized and identified!

"When public statements were being considered, one of my

League friends said to me, 'after years on League Boards, you know you cannot write anything by yourself any more.' I knew she was right. So all materials and even some speeches were prepared and edited by several people.

"I cannot emphasize too strongly that the training and experience from working cooperatively on League programs is of great value in political life, not only to the individual candidate but also in recognition by the community.

"You might be amused to know that for me the most difficult task was speaking before the League's candidates' meeting. It simply did not feel comfortable to reverse roles.

"The problems of a growing community are interesting and I am enjoying reading zoning ordinances, the plumbing code, traffic reports, etc. You might be interested to know that one of my delicate changes was to persuade the Board of Aldermen to send out an agenda in advance, also to have



the minutes mimeographed so that each alderman could have a copy. Doesn't that sound Leagueish?

"I am sorry to have missed so many League affairs this year. I am sure you know my heart is always with you.

"My only wish is that more members of the League might be encouraged to run for public office. I am enjoying it."

VOTERCIPHER No. 12

VOTERCIPHER is a cryptogram—writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 12 will be found in the next issue.

TOO IEPXOVRDV BA OPAL
XWBJW VERA BE LWV IEPXBED.

—SPWE NYAIBE

Answer to Votercipher No. 11

Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it.

—George Bernard Shaw

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